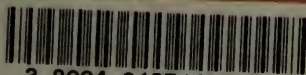


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**Queen's University  
Library**

**KINGSTON, ONTARIO**

NOTES BY THE WAY

ON

Free Libraries and Books

WITH A PLEA

FOR THE

ESTABLISHMENT OF RATE-SUPPORTED LIBRARIES

IN THE

PROVINCE OF ONTARIO,

BY

JOHN HALLAM.

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TORONTO :

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## PREFACE.

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**I**N preparing the following notes on free public libraries, I am greatly indebted to J. D. Mullins, Chief Librarian of the Birmingham Free Libraries, and to others who have written on the formation and management of the greatest educational machinery of our age. I visited many of these institutions in England, France, and some of the People's Libraries in Germany. Not knowing the language, I could get very little information, only that they were in some way under the management and control of the municipal authorities, and "free to the people."

These notes are mere "shreds and patches gleaned on the way;" simply a summary of what the writer saw and heard about free public libraries in lands beyond the sea.

Free public libraries, to be useful and successful, must be *rate-supported*, and free from the tedious formalities of an educational department, and represent every phase of human thought and opinion, every class and condition of men, and be absolutely free from all political and sectarian influences. They are the institutions of the people. They must initiate, manage and pay for their support.

LINDEN VILLA,

TORONTO, 23rd Dec., 1881.



## A PLEA FOR RATE-SUPPORTED LIBRARIES.

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Taking part in any movement having for its object the enlightenment and lifting up of the people has always been to me a source of enjoyment, and on this occasion I feel it a privilege as well as a duty which, if realized, must not only secure mental enlightenment for many, but be an honor of high character to the city of Toronto. I have seriously thought over the propriety of having a free public library in Toronto; and the more I have pondered over the subject, the more have I been convinced that we ought to possess one. The establishment of such a library has a special claim on all classes in this Queen City of the West, apart from the direct benefits it will confer on the community. We all feel a pride in our city and its many useful institutions, and would feel more so if we had a free public library, for all must be sensible of the fact that the foundation of a public library has in all ages of the world constituted a claim on the grateful remembrance of posterity, and added distinction to the place in which it has been established. In all the chief and most vital departments of life there is more practical intelligent action displayed now, and also a greater yearning for such action, than at any former period of the world's history.

Upon activity of this kind depends the welfare of man and the true progress of nations. It is THE force which moves the world: it is THE only real power which can move it. Individually and nationally, we each day become more alive to the fact that "Knowledge is power"—that it is the very source, spirit and embodiment of power the most lasting, and strength the most useful. As nations emerge from barbarism they resort more to brain and less to mere muscle, and the true superiority of the civilized man over the savage consists in the former having secured more rational ideas as to the conditions of life, the resources of nature, and the best way such resources can be utilized. Education can alone fully supply and sustain the power.



Some persons have received a high and liberal education, but the majority, through no fault of their own, have but a defective supply of that light which we term education. The prevailing notion of education is, to teach the young. Here the mother is the first monitor, and then the schoolmaster. Education at this stage is primary and fundamental, and means drawing out the faculties of the young mind and not the mere cramming and accumulation of things in the memory, which is too often the case now. The young mind should not be a cupboard, and never was intended to be a place for the storing of things without first knowing their meaning and import. Children are like saplings full of tendrils; they must be trained before they are taught how to shoot. Here comes in the difference between education and information. Education means all this, and something more. It has been truly said, "Education is the process of making individual men participators in the best attainments of the human mind in general, namely, in that which is the most rational, true, beautiful and good."

Tellier says: "Much of our education, even our best education, is got out of school."

Then how are we to attain this desirable end; for people cannot always be going to school? It follows that, in order to make up in some degree for that which has been either neglected or but partially performed, and to keep pace with the progress and requirements of civilization, communities should, during their leisure hours, resort considerably to books, and where books cannot be individually procured, then I hold that they should be obtained by combined action. As supplements to ordinary education, as means for supplying to the masses what defective training or limited resources of money may have deprived them of, and as counter attractions to the many enervating allurements which have crept into modern life, I look upon free libraries as the best possible agencies and material aids which can be devised.

The words "Free Public Library" possess a charm which scarcely any others can claim, and there are few associations so pleasant as those excited by them. To all lovers of books and poor students the doors of these institutions are wide open, without money and without price, to the rich and poor alike. They mean a place where they may withdraw from the hurry and bustle of everyday life, from the cares of commerce and the strife of politics, and hold sweet com-



munion with the saints and heroes of the past; "and where I can," says Edmund Waller, "call up the ablest spirits of ancient times, the most learned philosophers, the wisest councillors, and make them serviceable to me." The multiplication of free libraries, and their popularization, is one of the progressive signs of the age in which we live. Greater, grander and nobler in their aim and in their ultimate results, are these institutions. They are designed at no distant future to take possession of the public mind. These will be the future temples, where the grandest and noblest of the high priests of literature will sing their sweet songs, to cheer and console us through life's journey.

In a mental, moral and social sense, they are highly useful: they not only tend to enlighten and to make sharper men and better citizens generally, but they involve a real pleasure which, if once tasted, will never be wholly neglected or forgotten.

In the perusal of properly selected books—such books as ought to find their way into every free library—pleasure is intermingled with profit, and, I need hardly say, is a very admirable combination.

An allusion to the history as well as to the advantages of books will not, I think, be without interest. Here let me give some testimony as to the value of good books:

"Books rule the whole civilized world."—*Voltaire*.

"Books, dear books,

Have been and are my comfort morn and night.

Adversity, prosperity, at home,

Abroad, health, sickness, good or ill report—

The same firm friends, the same refreshment rich,

And source of consolation."—*Dr. Dodds*.

"Books are a guide in youth and an entertainment in old age. They help us to forget the crossness of men and things, compose our cares and lay our disappointments asleep. When we are weary of the living we may repair to the dead, who have nothing of peevishness, pride or design in their conversation."—*Jeremy Taylor*.

"Books are each a world, and books we know,

Are a substantial world, both pure and good.

Round these with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,

Our pastime and our happiness will grow."—*Wordsworth*.

"A good book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit embalmed, and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life."—*Milton*.

"Books are for company the best friends; in doubt, councillors; in deep sorrow, comforters; Time's prospective; the home traveller's ship or

horse ; the busy man's best recreation ; the opiate of idle weariness ; the mind's best ordinary ; Nature's garden, seed-plot of immortality."—*Richard Whitelock*.

"Books, my sure solace, and refuge from frivolous cares ; books, the calmers, as well as the instructors of the mind."—*Mrs. Inchbald*.

"Come my best friends, my books, and lead me on."—*Cowley*.

"A book is a friend that never deceives."—*Guelbert De Pixerecourt*."

"My books are always at leisure for me ; they are never engaged."

—*Cicero*.

"Books are the legacies that genius leaves to mankind, to be delivered down from generation to generation, as presents to the posterity of those who are yet unborn."—*Addison*.

The remotest facts we can get at show that man has always had a special regard for books. Books are records of human feeling, opinion, action and experience ; and though the mere form of such records may have differed in different ages, the desire for and creation of such records have been inseparable from the career of mankind. Stones, metal, shells, leaves of trees, bark, skins, slabs of wood, sticks, wax, ivory, parchment, papyrus, and ultimately paper, have been used for those recording purposes. And the difficulty of production or reproduction—through the absence of printing—was so great, that the price of books, or, more properly, bound manuscripts, was in old times most extraordinary. So great was the value of books in those days, that the gift of one to a monastery or other religious place entitled the donor to sundry masses for the repose of his soul.

In the lives of the Popes and some of the bishops of the Roman Catholic Church, the donation of books to religious orders are recorded as acts of signal generosity, and the gifts even inscribed on the monuments of the departed benefactors.

Mention is made of a Homily which was once sold for 200 sheep and five quarters of wheat. An Egyptian King once gave in money the equivalent of \$15,000 for the works of three Greek authors, whose productions, or such of them as remain, can be bought for \$1.75. In the year 1440 a book which we can now purchase for one dollar and twenty-five cents would have cost \$2,500. The first type books were only printed on one side—as many nursery books now are ; and the first book printed in English related to the "Game and playe of the Chesse," and was printed by Caxton. In the old times some books were deemed so valuable that money could not buy them. In the monastery of Suabia the monks had a very rare copy of Virgil which they could not be induced to part with for money ; but an

Englishman soon found out that these pious old monks had a weakness for hock, and this classical rarity, which could not be bought for gold, was ultimately secured with hock to the value of about \$36; so that one may say they were completely hoccussed out of this literary treasure, which found its way into the famous library of the Earl of Spencer. It is also stated that this famous and rich book collector bought the whole library of the Duke of Cassano to get possession of the Naples edition of Horace, printed in 1474; and to show the scarcity and value of books in 1425, when the English became masters of Paris, the Duke of Bedford, Regent of France, sent the whole of the royal library to England. The collection contained 853 volumes, comprising missals and devotional works, valued at £2,250. The value of money then, it is needless to say, was very much greater than now.

So valuable were books, or so scarce—which is the measure of value—were they, that some time after the introduction of printing, volumes were deposited in churches for public perusal, and chained to the desks or benches on which they were placed, so as to prevent their more ardent or covetous admirers stealing them. In the parish church of Leyland, which is about three miles from my native place—Chorley, in Lancashire—there are now found relics of this old book-planting system. They consist of four books relating to martyrology, &c., and they are bound in wood and chained to the bottom of a window. The people living when this system was in vogue could not know much about books, owing to their rarity; but I presume they would, at any rate, know a little more as to the meaning of their contents than some literary speculators I have read of, who once, to their apparent great delight, met with some volumes written in Arabic, purchased them, then hurried home apparently still more gleeful, and afterwards, on getting the said “works” examined by somebody, were as amazed as exasperated to find that they were merely the old used-up account books of some Arabian tradesfolk or shopkeepers—waste paper, like that we buy now for about two and a quarter dollars per hundred pounds. Amongst all the leading nations there has always been a desire evinced for book-collecting and library-forming. The oldest or first library is said to have been formed by an Egyptian king at Memphis. The first library of the Greeks was at Athens. In Western Europe libraries were first formed by Charlemagne in the eighth century, under the

direction and management of Alcuin, a learned Saxon, who, in early life was a pupil of Egbert, Archbishop of York, who got copies of books, and thus transplanted into France the flowers of Britain. The Anglo-Saxons manifested a disposition favorable to having libraries in England; subsequently, the first library in that country was at York. Libraries were founded in Germany in the eleventh century, and in Spain in the twelfth. The first lending or circulating library of which we read in well attested history, according to Dr. Adam Clarke, was formed at Cæsarea about the year 309 A.D. by St. Pamphilius, and comprised about 30,000 volumes, a most extraordinary number for that time. They mostly treated on religious subjects, and the books were only lent to religiously disposed persons.

The first circulating library we read of in England was formed in London about 1730, by one Wright, a bookseller in the Strand.

Southey says that Samuel Fancourt was the first to start a circulating library in London.

In 1745 there was a circulating library established at Cambridge.

In 1751, William Hutton, a learned bookseller, started a real circulating library at Birmingham. This class of libraries rapidly extended, and were a great boon to those readers who could not afford to buy books. They were the means of effecting an immense improvement in the better diffusion of education and information to the people.

The success of these libraries was so great that some wise head proposed to tax them by license at a yearly rate of two shillings and sixpence per 100 volumes.

In the year 1799 an Act was passed requiring every one who wished to start a news-room or circulating library to take out a license; but let me quote the words of this Act, which are most extraordinary: "Every house, room or place, which shall be opened or used as a place of meeting for the purpose of reading books, pamphlets, newspapers, or other publications, and to which any person shall be admitted by payment of money (if not regularly licensed by those in authority), shall be deemed a *disorderly house*, and the persons opening it shall be punished as the law directs."

The greatest library of antiquity was founded by Ptolemy Soter at Alexandria, and with the contents of another, called its "Daughter," the total number of books of a public library character in that city was about 600,000. Through the fanaticism of Caliph Omar chiefly,



the great collection of books here was destroyed, his argument being : "If the books agree with the Koran, the word of God, they are useless, and need not be preserved ; if they disagree with it, they are pernicious ; let them be destroyed." Gibbon has, with icy scepticism, sneered away the romantic tale of the learned Albupharagius as to the burning of the famous Alexandrian Library by Caliph Omar. He is strongly tempted to "deny that the 700,000 volumes, more or less, collected by the learning and munificence of the Ptolemys, were distributed among the four thousand baths of the captured city." The historian leans to the opinion that "the library had been dispersed ages before the time of Caliph Omar." Omar evidently had as great a contempt for books as Hobbes, the Malmesbury philosopher, who, though greatly indebted to them, once said that he should like all the books in the world to be put into a ship—a pretty big ship he must have had in his imagination, to take such a freight—and then to have a hole bored in her side and sunk. I suppose he would have excepted his own great work, the "Leviathan ;" but I am not certain, for, having such a name, he might suspect, like the writer of old, that the "Leviathan" could swim.

This one-book theory reminds me of a story I once heard related about an old English lady. She had a very bad memory. One book satisfied her ; and yet this was strange, for she was quite fond of reading, and liked to read something fresh ; but having such a memory as that I have named, her one book was always a new one, for, by the time she got to the end of the volume she had forgotten all the previous parts, and so kept reading it over and over again, deriving each time the enjoyment of original perusal. She was a woman of one book.

There is a very good story told of a respectable alderman of Oxford, who was so fascinated with "Robinson Crusoe," that from youth to old age he could read no other book except the Bible, and read it through every year and believed every word to be true. Unfortunately for him, a matter-of-fact sort of a friend told him it was little more than fiction, and the hero nothing more than a Scotch sailor named Alexander Selkirk, whose plain story of his shipwreck on the Island of Juan Fernandez had been embellished, and worked up into the charming narrative he so much admired. "Your information may be correct," said the worthy alderman ; "but, in deceiving me, you have robbed me of one of the greatest pleasures of my old age."

With respect to modern libraries, printing has of course done very much for them. The greatest libraries in the world are in London, Paris, Munich, Berlin, Vienna, Rome, St. Petersburg and Copenhagen. The chief libraries in America are the Congress Library, the public one at Boston, and that at Harvard College, and in Canada the Government Library at Ottawa, and the University Library at Toronto.

That famous storehouse of learning, the British Museum, has a wondrous collection of books, comprising over 1,350,000 volumes. The yearly addition of books to the library is over 35,000 volumes.

Antonio Panizzi, in his evidence before a Select Committee on the British Museum, said : " I want a poor student to have the same means of indulging his learned curiosity, of consulting the same authorities, of following the most intricate inquiry, as the richest man in the kingdom, as far as books go." The noblest and most costly bequest of books ever made to this temple of learning was that of Thomas Grenville. This rare collection comprised 20,240 volumes, and had cost over \$270,000. Rich and rare were the gems, and without a rival for beauty and splendor of binding. All accessible to the public except those priceless rarities, Caxton's "Game and Playe of the Chesse," and Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories and Tragedies, printed in 1623.

The memorandum to the codicil to the Right Hon. Thomas Grenville's will, in which he gave his unique collection of books to the nation, is very nobly worded thus : " A great part of my library has been purchased from the profits of a sinecure office given me by the public, and I feel it to be a debt and a duty that I should acknowledge this obligation by giving that library so acquired to the British Museum, for the use of the public."

With respect to free public libraries, though they may seem very novel to some persons and grate unpleasantly upon the ears of others—those highly economical people, who consider that it is a good deal more blessed to button up their trousers' pocket than to give anything out of them—I say, that while to these folks free public libraries may look singular and by no means agreeable, they are in one sense old institutions and in another sense institutions which, in the Old World and especially in England, are becoming decidedly popular. On the continent of Europe free libraries have long met, in their establishment and protection, with the favor of



municipal bodies. In developing these libraries and keeping them abreast of the times, some of the municipal authorities alluded to may have been remiss: but they nevertheless have shown a praiseworthy desire for their establishment and conservation. Private generosity has, in many instances, been at the foundation of them. Books given by lovers of literature to corporations, to be kept by corporations for the use of the public, have been the origin of these libraries.

### FRANCE.

It is said that "they do these things better in France," and if I may judge of the truth of this saying from the number of free public libraries under the control and support of the different municipal departments wherein they are established, I would say they did. There are in France over 350 free public libraries; of these about 300 are consulting or reference and lending libraries, the balance lending libraries only. The number of printed books were estimated, in 1878, to have been over 4,250,000 volumes, and about 45,000 MSS. relating to the early history of France, and to ecclesiastical and Church history. Not a few of these libraries had their foundation at the spoliation of the monastic institutions of the country; and being taken care of by the municipal authorities, to them can be traced the beginning of the French free public libraries. To go into this more particularly: There are six provincial towns having over 720,000 printed volumes and MSS., and sixteen towns having 485,041 volumes and MSS., besides a number of villages having from 2,000 to 3,000 volumes each. Paris possesses the finest free libraries in the country, rich in every department of literature, and having many bibliographical rarities. There are eight free libraries, the chief being the National Library, and the whole stock of books, maps and MSS. is equal to about 2,000,000. The City Council of Paris has a magnificent municipal library, which was lodged in a little chapel of the Palais Luxembourg during the rebuilding of the Hotel de Ville. This unique collection of books is bound in different colors, according to the country from which they came, each nation having a color assigned to it. There were books from Canada, United States, England and Germany. Lyons has a noble free library, creditable to the town of silks. This library comprises over 150,000 volumes and MSS., and is chiefly famous for the grand collections bequeathed to it by Pierre Aubert, Claude Brossette, and Pierre

Adamoli, who made it one of the conditions that the librarian should be neither "monk nor bookseller." Rouen, a very large manufacturing town, has a famous free library, and is notable as the birthplace of Corneille. This library comprises about 200,000 volumes and MSS. rich in French history, and some very rare works. Vire is a beautiful village in Normandy, famous for its old castle and its library of English books. The founder of this library was a Frenchman—Monsieur Pichon. He was taken prisoner by the English at the capture of Louisburg, in 1758; he then went to England, and got up this library, and presented it to his native place, Vire. It was in this collection that Dibdin saw a black-lettered Latin Bible, by Proben, of the date 1485, and offered a gold Napoleon for this black-letter diamond; the librarian replied, "We are always pleased to show our books, and even allow them to be read, but we do not sell them."

#### GERMANY.

Berlin has a Royal Library having over 700,000 volumes and about 15,000 MSS., 9 public libraries, and 15 people's libraries, in various parts of the city. These, as nearly as I could learn, not knowing the language, were under municipal control, and free to all comers. I also found good libraries at Leipzig and Dresden, free to the people. Germany is a nation of book publishers and authors. The catalogue of Leipzig contains the names of over 57,000 authors; and it is estimated that over 10,000 new publications are sent out from the German press every year, comprising over a million volumes; and it has been sarcastically stated that the time will soon come when the number of German writers will exceed that of German readers. There is one very noticeable feature about the German libraries which is very commendable, and which exists nowhere else: that of sending books from one city to another, through the different libraries, to any student who may require them, at the trifling cost of the carriage.

#### GREAT BRITAIN.

Respecting the United Kingdom, the free library movement is, especially in England, making commendable headway. For many years libraries given by private individuals and rendered accessible to the public by personal recommendations from mayors, aldermen, etc., have been in existence in some of the older boroughs. But many of these libraries, though very good in their way, and substan-

tial monuments of the generosity of those who bequeathed them to the public, have become too antiquarian or classical for popular appreciation. Free libraries for the people, dependent on subscriptions and gifts of books from the clergy and gentry, have not been a success in England, for they had the brand of charity on them, which was an insuperable hindrance to their becoming popular and useful. Only by such stores of modern books as town authorities can obtain by means of the Free Libraries Act of 1850 can the popular mind of the United Kingdom be attracted and tangibly operated upon. By the English Legislature, several Acts of Parliament have been passed in regard to free public libraries. The first had reference to England, and was passed in 1850. Three years later the Public Libraries Act was extended to Ireland and Scotland. Since then, so far as legislation goes, it has involved various amendments, the last being made in 1877.

By the Act of 1850 the supporting rate could not exceed one-halfpenny in the pound, and somehow it made no allowance for the supply of books. By an amendment passed in 1871, all towns having a population of upwards of 5,000 may, through their town councils, and with the consent of two-thirds of the ratepayers, establish free libraries and support the same out of the rates to the extent of one penny in the pound. Parishes with a similar population, as also local improvement districts, can, by a similar majority of ratepayers, establish free libraries in their midst, and support them by the same means. The Act only applies in Scotland and Ireland to boroughs with populations of 10,000 and upwards. I think this is a mistake. Any town or district, whatever its population, should, if it is willing to tax itself for a purpose so laudable as that of book buying and book reading, be allowed to do so. With respect to the Irish, perhaps the Legislature thought that all communities with 10,000 were enlightened enough by nature—a compliment to Pat; or that, like Jack Lofty, the creation of one of Ireland's and the world's most pleasant writers (Oliver Goldsmith), they did not care about indulging in or making the acquaintance of very polished people; for it will be remembered that Jack Lofty, who figures as a character in Goldsmith's "Good-natured Man," said, when a modern poet was mentioned to him, "Oh, a modern; we men of business despise the moderns; and as for the ancients, we have not time to read them." Then, so far as Scotland goes, the Legislature might

conceive that the parochial school system, which has so long and so excellently prevailed there, would, in the less populous districts, secure for the inhabitants as much education as they needed. But the education which the system named confers is chiefly if not entirely elementary; to the bulk it amounts to no more; and it should have been remembered that in the matter of reading, say, after people are made efficient in that department, they then require something placed within their reach to read, otherwise it is simply like giving a person brisk morning exercise, and then telling him that there is no breakfast for the appetite created.

In the United Kingdom there are now about 100 rate-supported free public libraries, possessing in the aggregate upwards of one million volumes; and the great majority—nearly all of them, I might say—have museums connected with them, equally free to the public. Lancashire was the first county in Britain which took advantage of the Public Free Libraries Act of 1850, and Manchester was the first place within that county which applied the Act. The principal free libraries in England are at Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, Sheffield and Leeds. Nearly all the free libraries in the United Kingdom have reference departments, containing books which can be freely referred to, but which cannot be taken off the premises like the volumes in the lending sections. Works of fiction form a considerable portion of the stock of lending books at each library.

The people of Leicester appear to be fonder of works of fiction than those of any other borough in the kingdom where the Free Libraries Act has been adopted. There, according to the latest report, I have seen the issue of books of fiction actually amount to 80 per cent. of the entire lot taken out of the library. Considering the practical manner in which the people of Leicester devote themselves to the *understandings* of other people—their staple trade being boot and shoe making—it is somewhat strange that they should attend to their own in this very “light” fashion.

NOVELS.—Many persons object to free public libraries because a large per-centage of the books taken out of the lending department are novels; forgetting that a great number of the books in our Sunday School libraries are works of fiction, moral and religious stories, drawn with a delicacy of touch on the line of novel land—

“Truth severe by fairy fiction dressed.”



The type of novels in these libraries is best represented by "The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain," "The Dairyman's Daughter," "Cœlebs in Search of a Wife," "The Basket of Flowers," &c. These are novels in every sense of the word—novels with a purpose to teach religious and moral truths.

Gibbon says : "The constitution of minds differs like that of bodies ; the same regimen will not suit all ; each individual ought to study his own tastes." Just so ; there are good and bad books on every subject, as well as good and bad novels.

Charles Lamb says : "I have no repugnance. 'Shaftesbury' is not too genteel for me, or 'Jonathan Wild' too low. I can read any thing I can call a book."

There would be a great many Sir Anthony Absolutes now if they could have their way, condemning everything in books that did not agree with their ideas. Thanks to the universality of reading, which is the true and sure test of good taste, they cannot have their way, of our free libraries would be condemned, as the circulating libraries were in 1775. In Sheridan's famous play, "The Rivals," Sir Anthony Absolute says : "A circulating library in a town is an ever-green tree of diabolical knowledge ; it blossoms all the year ; and depend on it, that they who are so fond of handling the leaves will long for the fruit at last."

The most careful folk regarding books in the kingdom appear to be those of South Shields, for there I find they have only lost about three books since their free library was opened eight years since.

All the free libraries in England seem to be much in favor by the communities among whom they are situated. I heard of no grumbling at their cost ; and they have come to be regarded as most pleasant, convenient and necessary institutions, and the people cheerfully pay to sustain them. Perhaps, however, I ought to except just one place—the before-named place devoted so much to other people's understandings—I mean Leicester ; it makes no headway at all ; evidently thinks that in the matter of progress there is and should be "nothing like leather ;" for there I learn (if a change has taken place, it has occurred recently) that "the issues of books in both lending and consulting departments have been *stationary since the opening of the free library* ten years ago." One of the English free libraries—that at Bolton—has a peculiar, and yet a quite advantageous sort of inner circle department of reading. It has what I

may term a central subscription library ; its government and membership are separate from those of the general free library ; the subscription is one guinea per annum ; books are purchased and in no case hired, and after a period of twelve months all private proprietorship in them ceases, and they pass from the subscription library into the free library. A somewhat similar plan to this exists at Dundee. In Wales there are about half a dozen free libraries ; in Scotland about eleven (there is one not so very far from John o'Groat's house, it is at Thurso) ; and in Ireland there are only three places which have as yet adopted and put into force the Free Libraries' Act—Dundalk, Ennis and Sligo ; they are of recent adoption, and no particulars are yet within reach as to their success. There is one fact which is self-evident to all who visit this unhappy island, that in some parts they are sadly in rear of all kinds of educational works. It is hopeful to see some signs of improvement.

#### BIRMINGHAM.

This magnificent free library was destroyed by fire in January, 1879. The Shakespearian Library, said to contain over 7,000 volumes, and in which, by years of labor, the most complete body of Shakespearian literature had been brought together, was entirely lost. The Cervantes' Library, containing all the known editions, and of books relating to and illustrating them, was also destroyed.

Nearly the whole of the reference library, containing over 40,000 volumes, was destroyed, also a unique collection of works on Warwickshire. These rare collections were gems of literature and invaluable ; most of them can never be replaced. There was much interest manifested in the loss of this library, and for its restoration contributions were given, and in a very short time 390 persons gave \$66,315 ; working-men, \$285 ; members of the Natural History and Literary Associations, \$4,135 ; making in all \$71,675. The report says, on this sad literary calamity, "Great sympathy was felt and expressed throughout the country and abroad. Valuable gifts of books were received towards the restoration of the library."

The present number of volumes is 86,000 ; the reference library has recuperated itself wonderfully since the disaster named. It now includes 44,000 books ; the monthly average of volumes lent out is 35,000 ; while the number consulted for purely reference purposes is on the average 21,600 per month. The library system here is of the



divisional kind. It consists of one reference, two central lending, and six town branch lending libraries, with news-rooms attached. The maintenance is, of course, considerable, but the penny rate meets the expenditure—must do so. It realizes £6,000 a year, which sum supports the libraries and pays off the interest and proportion of the capital borrowed. At Birmingham there are also an art gallery and a museum under the management of the Free Library Committee. They are partly provided by gifts and partly by purchased articles. And they are well patronized by the public.

## MANCHESTER

has a fine free library system. It consists of seven divisional libraries, the total number of books being 147,631—64,077 for reference and 83,554 for lending purposes. The monthly average of reference books consulted is 19,058 (this, at any rate, was the number referred to in March—the month quoted in the return I have procured), while the monthly average of books lent out (same month given) is 71,411. The total annual cost of books and maintenance is £11,000. The yearly costs of the newspapers, magazines, etc., of the reading room department is £650. In connection with the free library system there is no museum department, but the inhabitants are not without gratuitous accommodation in this respect. They have, and for many years have had, certainly one very fine museum. I refer to that at Peel Park. It is a commodious, extensively patronized, well equipped museum, and I should say one of the most valuable and interesting in the United Kingdom. This library has a most remarkable collection of pamphlet literature relating to trade, commerce, political and religious questions which have agitated the public mind for the last 40 years, and must prove of immense value to the future historian; is rich to overflowing in English history and literature, county histories, and a splendid collection of works on plastic arts and textile manufactures. The library enjoys a most liberal and generous endowment, but this great educator was not left to depend for its lasting success on the liberality of individuals, for when it was put before the ratepayers for the adoption of the Library Act, they voted 4,000 to 441 in favor of taxing themselves to the extent of one penny in the pound for library purposes. All honor to the town of calicoes and prints as being the pioneer in this noble and regenerating movement. The people never grumble at being

taxed for a good thing. The Hon. Edward Everett, on the incidences of taxation in the States, told Lord Lytton, in a conversation a few days before the opening of this library, "that our largest tax of all is our education rate. We never grumble at its amount, because it is in education that we find the principle of our national safety." This library, with its numerous branches, is the best and most successfully managed institution in the world, and stands in the front rank for usefulness. At the opening of the lending department of this library, speaking to a resolution, Monckton Milnes (Lord Houghton) said: "These books are to be enjoyed by all the inhabitants of this place in full *community*, and they will be shared alike by the wealthiest and most intelligent amongst you, and by the *poorest* and *simplest*."

Lord Lytton said on the same occasion: "A library is not only a school, it is an arsenal and an armory. Books are weapons either for war or for self-defence, and the principles of chivalry are as applicable to the student now as they were to the knights of old. To defend the weak, to resist the oppressor, to give to man the service and to God the glory, is the student's duty now, as it was once the duty of the knight."

#### LIVERPOOL.

The questions I submitted for answers could not, for want of time, be replied to as they were formulated; but from the Town Clerk's office I received a copy of the last report issued. It is the 28th annual report, and brings matters down to the present year. From this I learn that "the history of this institution has been one of continued progress from its commencement, nor has the last year fallen short in any department of usefulness." It has a well patronized reference library; the average daily consultations during the past year being 2,057. The total number of volumes in the lending departments is 43,285, and the issues during the past twelve months have been 436,415. The daily average issue of magazines for the same period has been 231, or 65,056 in the aggregate; the average issue of weekly periodicals 213,975, or 760 per day. There is here, as at other places, a stock of "Patents for Inventions" volumes, which, during the year, have been consulted 13,913 times. There are many dictionaries at the library of which no statistics are taken. In connection with the library there is a large and magnificent museum, which, during the 213 days it was open last year, had an average daily attendance of 1,948 visitors, and a beautiful art gallery,

which last year had an average daily attendance of 2,349. The contents of the former consist largely of given and loaned articles. Those of the latter are to some extent of a similar character. The building, I understand, with some pictures, was a gift of Sir A. B. Walker. Exhibitions of pictures, independent of the ordinary stock on view, have been periodically held in this gallery, and have attracted much public attention; 84,650 of the 610,779 persons who went to the place last year being visitors thereof. In addition to the library, museum and art gallery, an annexe for ethnological objects is now being constructed in the rear of the last named institution. The fact that this combination of places receives the popular patronage which the figures indicate, shows the way in which they are appreciated. Indeed, as a simple matter of common sense, they would not be kept open—certainly the free library and reading room—if the people did not feel convinced that they were worth the money expended upon them. The people of Liverpool are greatly indebted to Sir William Brown for his unbounded liberality towards establishing the free library and museum. The first stone of the Brown Free Library and Museum buildings was laid on the 15th April, 1857. On this occasion Sir William spoke as follows: “When I proposed building the library and museum, I considered that I was only performing an act of public duty which Divine Providence had placed within my power, and which deserved very little thanks.” About one in three of the volumes issued are novels. Next come travels, voyages, poetry, history, biography, botany, and many magnificent works on natural history, including the works of Catlin, Bonaparte, Audubon and Wilson. What would not William Roscoe, one of Liverpool’s noblest sons in literature, have given when entering as a young and a poor student upon the battle of life—before he became famous as the author of the “Life of Lorenzo de’ Medici” and the “Life and Pontificate of Leo X.”—for the opportunities and helps these institutions now afford? Those sad yet hopeful words he wrote on being forced by adverse circumstances to part with his noble library:

“As one who, destined from his friends to part,  
 Regrets his loss, but hopes again, erewhile  
 To share their converse and enjoy their smile,  
 And temper as he may affection’s dart:  
 Thus, loved associates, chiefs of elder art,  
 Teachers of wisdom, who could once beguile  
 My tedious hours, and lighten every toil,

I now resign you. Nor with fainting heart ;  
 For pass a few short years, or days, or hours,  
 And happier seasons may their dawn unfold,  
 And all your sacred fellowship restore ;  
 When freed from earth, unlimited its powers,  
 Mind shall with mind direct communion hold,  
 And kindred spirits meet to part no more."

## PRESTON

has recently adopted the Free Libraries Act. In 1879 it opened a small free library for its inhabitants, the nucleus thereof being a lot of cheaply purchased books from a semi-moribund local place called the Preston Literary and Philosophical Institution. There are now in this free library 9,073 volumes : 200 being of the reference order. The monthly average of books referred to is 200 : the monthly average of books lent out is 8,000. The annual cost of books and maintenance is £1,000, and the cost of news room per year is £60. Attached to the library is a reading-room, well stocked with newspapers, magazines, etc., and, like the library, chiefly patronized by working-class people. A small but neat and newly-organized museum, free to the public, is located in a building belonging to the Corporation, about a quarter of a mile off, and in immediate contiguity with it is a collection of books consisting largely of classical, historical and biographical works, called "Dr. Shepherd's Library"—Dr. Shepherd, an old and now long-deceased local gentleman, being the generous bequeather of it to the town. This is chiefly a reference library, and gratuitous admission to it is obtained on the personal or written recommendation of any of the local aldermen. The general free library is situated in the Town Hall. By and by a fine new building will be erected in Preston. Acting in conformity with discretionary powers invested in them as the trustees of a deceased local gentleman (Mr. E. R. Harris), they have, on condition that the Corporation will provide a suitable site, decided to give £90,000 for a new free library and museum building—£60,000 for building purposes, £15,000 for endowment, and £15,000 for reference books and works of art. The Corporation have decided to give the requisite site, the cost of which, in the demolition of rent-making premises, etc., will amount to several thousands of pounds. The money granted by the trustees in question for endowment, reference works, and museum articles, will not meet the whole of the provisional and maintenance charges ; the deficit in this respect will have



to be met by the ratepayers, and thus far, though the times have for between one and two years been anything but prosperous or even promising, they have, with very rare exceptions, given no audible vent to anything like a grumbling spirit in reference to free library expenditure.

## BRADFORD.

This Yorkshire borough has a good free library, consisting of a central reference collection of books, a central lending department, and six divisional collections in different parts of the town, for the greater convenience of the inhabitants. According to the last issued annual report (for 1880), the reference portion of the library contains 11,152 volumes, the lending department 13,401 volumes, and other branches (that for patent specifications supplied by Government being, I should say, the chief), about 8,000 other books. The library was opened in 1872 for reference purposes; in the following year a lending department was added, and in 1874-5 the first of the divisional places was opened. The total consultations of reference books last year was 217,598; the issues from the lending departments during the like period were 1,081,871; and the specification book were evidently fairly attractive, for during the year there were 11,355 consultations. The yearly cost of books and maintenance is about £3,000. In connection with the free library there are news-rooms for males and females. The cost of the newspapers, magazines, etc., supplied to the news-rooms is about £120 per year. The library rate of 1d. in the pound yields at present about £3,200 per annum. There is also in the town an art museum, established under the Public Libraries and Museums Acts, and since its opening on the 6th of December to the 11th of October—ten months within five days, and the latest period reported upon—the number of public visits was 132,261.

There has been more real suffering and poverty in Bradford, through the change of fashions in women's dress goods, this last five years, than in any part of England. They paid their taxes, and the library and museum flourished.

## EDINBURGH

does not possess a free library, for this simple reason: it has already plenty of libraries, etc., virtually free to the public. It has also, as anybody who has seen its "sights" must know, plenty of free

museum facilities. Through methods of its own, and in consequence of its special character—nationally and educationally—the capital of Scotland has provided for its occupants means for mental improvement, recreation, etc., which other places, as a rule, can only hope to secure by the aid of such a legislative enactment as that which the Free Libraries Act constitutes.

#### IN DUBLIN

there are collegiate, professional, and mechanics' institute libraries, but none of the popular free order. The only approach to the latter are the Library of the Royal Dublin Society, transferred to the Government by "The Dublin Science and Art Museum Act," for the purpose of being developed as a National Library, and Marsh's Library, which consists chiefly of works pertaining to theology, ancient history, etc. As to museum facilities, there are many in Dublin. A museum is part of the Science and Art Department. It is now maintained by Government. It is almost exclusively a Museum of Natural History, and admission to it is free. The admission to the University Museum is also free. Then there is a Botanic Museum at Glasnevin, also free. At the Royal Irish Academy there is also a Museum of Irish Antiquities. With these facts before us we can reasonably come to the conclusion that rate-supported libraries are appreciated in Great Britain.

All has been said that is necessary in reference to the free library movement in the United Kingdom and on the Continent of Europe. There can be no moral doubt that they have been pre-eminently successful; their influence has been of the highest order, both morally and socially, and they have been incentives to intellectual activity. There is nothing better worth studying than success, when success means something; and the fact of its succeeding furnishes the clue to a particular state of the public mind. The subject is full of merit, and is worth ventilating and thoroughly threshing out, and would not be complete without a reference to the United States. The Americans are a practical and matter-of-fact people. The free library movement has taken deep root, and is flourishing in every State.

Commissioner Eaton, in his Special Report to Congress on Public and other Libraries in the United States of America, gives a list of over 3,649 public libraries, besides the number of books in each, and the name of the librarians. I can only in a general way refer to them.



Some of these public libraries are very fine, and many of them free and rate-supported.

The oldest and in some respects the finest library in the States, I mean the College Library at Cambridge, Mass., is free for all persons living in or visiting that city for study. New York has the honor of being the first place in the States where what is termed a "Free Town Library" was formed; this was early in the last century. There are now several free libraries in New York city, the greatest being the Astor Library. Boston has a splendid free library system.

Upwards of 20 years ago there were at least 153 free state, city or town libraries in the United States, and since then, it is hardly necessary to remark, there has been an onward and upward movement in this great cause of civilization.

Ald. Taylor says in his neat circulars on Free Libraries in the United States, that the people there have ceased arguing the question. They accept the necessity of a free library as they do gas works, in every town (for the fact is accomplished before it becomes a city), and assess and build accordingly. Here are a few cities taken at random, showing how maintained, &c. :

Place.	Source of Revenue.	Amount.	No. of Volumes.	Circulation.	City's Population.
Cincinnati .....	Board of Education.	\$34,572 }	132,807	769,367	289,000
	City Library fund...	18,996 }			
Chicago .....	City Library fund...	33,763 }	67,722	374,866	503,000
	City appropriation...	2,500 }			
Watertown, N. Y. ....	Dog tax .....	294 }	24,270	27,233	10,600
	City appropriation...	7,000 }			
Lawrence, Mass. ....	Dog tax .....	1,320 }	40,062	134,052	40,000
	City appropriation...	17,672 }			
Cleveland .....	City appropriation...	3,200 }	29,155	130,443	170,000
	Dog tax .....	1,127 }			
Taunton, Mass. ....	City appropriation...	8,000 }	16,878	61,347	21,000
	Dog tax .....	2,810 }			
Worcester, Mass. ....	City appropriation...	7,500 }	47,521	156,398	59,000
	Dog tax .....	2,810 }			
Newton, Mass. ....	City appropriation...	7,500 }	17,013	83,393	17,000
	Dog tax .....	2,810 }			

The worthy alderman goes on to say regarding the expense of this educator: "Last year the sum of £165,000 was voted for a new library building in Sydney, New South Wales, and £6,400 for maintenance for the year. The income of the Boston establishment for 1878 was \$124,200, of which \$14,400 was spent in books. Our country is too young, and the struggle for bread and butter too general, for the princely bequests that grace the records of other lands. To establish free libraries in Baltimore, George Peabody donated \$1,400,000; the Astors gave \$700,000 for New York, and Walter N. Newberry left \$2,000,000 for a similar purpose in Chicago.

Philadelphia received from Dr. James Rush \$1,000,000 to maintain a library, and Asa Packer left, by will, \$500,000 to the library of Lehigh University. These are large sums from large-hearted and long-pursed men. Let our men of means do their proportion. Never before was there such a chance to live in the hearts and memories of their countrymen as now offers, and though the city may, and undoubtedly will, establish a library, yet something more than the proceeds of a fractional assessment will be required to put our city in the same grade that cities of a like size and importance occupy in other countries."

The far-reaching movement in favor of public provisions for the establishment of free public libraries, seems likely to extend eventually to all the great mercantile cities and towns of the United States, and the instances given go to show that in the States public and private opinion as to the value of free public libraries is very much the same as in England. Their record of gifts and bequests of books and money exhibits striking examples of the great good that wealth may do in the hands of beneficent men. A few years ago I heard a very rich man in Toronto say, that he was merely a trustee in the hands of God ; but he died, and lost, it is said, from want of information to guide his benevolent intentions, the opportunity and the privilege of giving a part of his immense wealth for the establishment of any institution for the public good.

#### CANADA.

Very little has been done in this great country for free public libraries. The establishment of these institutions has a special claim on every ratepayer who desires to see our country advance to the front, and keep pace and progress in art, science, business, and everything that goes to make a country great and augment the sum of human happiness. The most potent secular agent next to our common schools is rate-supported libraries.

If the principle so ably and successfully contended for by the late Chief Superintendent of Education in Ontario is right—that the citizens of every city, town and village should be taxed to support common schools so that education should be free and accessible to all—it cannot be wrong to tax in the same manner for free public libraries. I believe he was the first to originate township libraries in Upper Canada, supported by grants partly from the Government and partly

from the townships, as well as the system of common schools. In the year 1849 Dr. Egerton Ryerson made a report to Lord Elgin recommending a grant of public lands for educational and library purposes; and pursuant to this recommendation, the School and Library Act was passed, setting apart one million acres of public lands for that purpose, thus providing a large sum of money annually. Free public libraries under this scheme made very little progress, though when Lord Elgin was leaving this country, he said: "I look upon your township and county libraries as the crown and glory of the institutions of this Province." According to the Report of the Chief Superintendent of Education, 1880, the free public libraries of Ontario received from the Education Department the following sums from 1853 to 1879:

	MONEYS.					Total number of Volumes supplied during the year.	Number of libraries exclusive of sub-divisions.	Total number of volumes in libraries.
	Local Appropriation.	Legislative Apportionment.	Value of books sent.	Value of books sent in former years.	Total value of books sent.			
	\$ c.	\$ c.	\$ c.	\$ c.	\$ c.			
Total Counties and Incorporated Villages..	1426 13	1426 13	2352 26	142844 96	145697 22	3281	1486	257675
Total Cities.....	173 78	240 75	414 53	18874 76	19289 29	393	17	24479
Total Towns.....	114 98	114 98	229 97	13065 67	13295 64	138	63	16589
Grand Totals.....	1714 89	1781 86	3496 76	174785 39	178282 15	3812	1566	298743

1. The amount expended in library books during 1879 was \$3,496, of which one-half has been provided from local sources. The number of volumes supplied was 3,812.

2. The value of public free libraries furnished to the end of 1879 was \$178,282. The number of libraries, exclusive of subdivisions, 1,566. The number of volumes in these libraries was 298,743.

3. The classification of these books is as follows: History 49,648; zoology and physiology 17,019; botany, 3,069; phenomena, 7,030; physical science, 5,236; geology, 2,499; natural philosophy and manufactures, 14,414; chemistry, 2,701; practical agriculture, 10,609; literature, 29,244; voyages, 27,545; biography, 33,071;

tales and sketches of practical life, 83,500 ; fiction, 5,041 ; teachers' library, 8,118.

Surely if these books were well selected, and not too elementary in their character, there should have been no failure in this *first attempt* at the establishment of free libraries in Ontario.

The Hon. Adam Crooks stated that the library system had been practically abandoned. Then, should not the Ontario Legislature pass a permissive Free Library Act, and let the people themselves decide the question of the establishment of rate-supported libraries ?

There is one fact worthy of notice just here, that Upper Canada had rate-supported schools long before they had them in England, but England had rate-supported libraries first, and I believe that rate-supported schools in England was the outcome of free public libraries. I put the question, that if a municipal tax freely voted by the people for the support of common schools works wisely and well, surely a rate for libraries must work in the same way. No one will, I think, be bold enough to deny this self-evident truth.

The highest aspiration of man is to obtain knowledge and wisdom. The common schools are admirably adapted to train the youth of our country, but what shall be done with them after they leave school and begin to battle with the practical realities of life, for many of them cannot afford to buy books any more than they could afford to pay for such an education as the common schools put within the reach of the masses. Here, then, is a much felt want in Toronto that can only be supplied by free public libraries. Then let the masses have rate-bought books, and let them read and not fall into the ways of ignorance and drink, and into the dark prison-house of thoughtlessness. Reading improves the inborn faculties, makes a man a better citizen, and helps him to form correct opinions of what is transpiring around him. With this in view, some one has said "that reading was regarded as an agent in salvation, and a means of applying the knowledge so gleaned more closely to the soul." Then what is to be done to secure so desirable an end? Should not the Council petition the Ontario Legislature to pass a Library Act similar to that of England, enabling municipalities of cities, towns and villages, on the vote of the people, to impose a rate not less than one-half mill on the dollar for the purpose of forming and maintaining free public libraries and acquiring by bequests real estate, books, and money, and the holding of the same by the people for library



purposes, with full power to hypothecate part of this rate for a number of years, so that the money necessary for the wants of the people in this direction should be supplied at once. This would give grand and immediate results, and not be burdensome to the taxpayer. Such a rate would produce annually, according to our present assessment of \$54,000,000, the sum of \$27,000. We could borrow say \$225,000, at  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. interest, with  $\frac{3}{4}$  of 1 per cent. for sinking fund, to pay the principal. The annual charge, at rate of  $5\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. (including sinking fund), would be \$11,812.50, leaving a balance of \$15,187.50 for the purchase of books, reviews, magazines and newspapers, for paying salaries, lighting, heating, and otherwise maintaining the library. We could spend for a central site and a good handsome building adapted for the requirements of a city like Toronto, with reading and lecture rooms, say \$150,000. With the balance, \$75,000, we could purchase at once from fifty to sixty-five thousand volumes of printed books.

This scheme may be too comprehensive and costly at first sight, and the overcautious ratepayer may pause before he assents to any such expenditure; but on reflection, for the due encouragement of learning by reading, and a free diffusion of knowledge by a good reference library, he must consent to it. The establishment of such a library has a claim on all classes in Toronto apart from the direct benefits it confers on the community.

Thomas Carlyle, in a speech delivered before the students of the University of Edinburgh, on "Books, study, life and duty," hit the nail on the head and drove it right home, when he said: "It remains, however, a curious truth, that the main use of universities of the present is that, after you have done with all your classes, the next thing is a collection of books, a great library of good books, which you proceed to study and to read. What the universities have mainly done—what I found the universities did for me—was, that they taught me to read in various languages and various sciences, so that I could go into the books which treated of these things and try everything I wanted to make myself master of gradually. The clearest and most imperative duty lies on every one of you to be assiduous in your reading."

I am satisfied that the free library movement, on the broadest and most liberal basis, should be recognized in this city. Sec-tarianism need in no way, and should in no way, be allied with such a

movement as this. Politics should in no form be associated with it. In the United Kingdom the free libraries are entirely undenominational and non-political; and this is the only sure, the only healthy and durable basis they can be worked on. I know that, as compared with the days of our immediate ancestors even, we have many splendid facilities for mental improvement and popular enlightenment. I am proud of numerous institutions for the spread of education which we have in Toronto, and I wish them God-speed; and I furthermore desire to say that the free library cause which I am now advocating would be an auxiliary of them—would supplement and in no way come into conflict with any of them. Far too many of our young people, and not a few of our old ones, are now in their leisure time simply wasting their existence. Many of the happiest hours of my life have been spent amongst books: I am wishful that the pleasure I have felt, and the profit I have derived, and the safety from external temptations I have enjoyed through companionship with books, should be experienced by others, by as many as possible of all classes—by those belonging to what is called “the better end” as well as by the humblest members of society; perhaps more so by the former than the latter, inasmuch as it is harder to “stand corn” than thistles. At any rate, I am anxious to see the free library movement well and comprehensively inaugurated in our midst. I do not want to bore people to death with reading; I should not wish any of you, even if you had time, to follow the example of that old German book worm, John Christopher Adelund, who devoted fourteen hours a day to books; and yet he even did not take very much harm, and somehow managed to squeeze out of “this vale of tears” sufficient time to look well after the “inner man,” for we are told that he loved the pleasures of the table, and had “never less than forty sorts of most precious wines in his cellar.” Nor, in the construction of a free library, should I wish to give you dry and uninteresting reading. I think the ingredients of such a library should be as general, as attractive and as fascinating as possible. I would have in a library of this sort a grand and durable foundation of solid, standard, fact literature. I would have a choice, clean-minded, finely imaginative superstructure of light reading. The vulgar, the sensuously sensational, the garbage of the modern press, I would most scrupulously avoid, just as I would avoid



dirt and the devil. I would have everything in a library of this kind useful and captivating ; mentally speaking, there should be nothing nasty and nothing dull in it. Next to dirty reading, for badness of effect, is dull reading.

“Some books were to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and a few to be chewed and digested.”—*Bacon*.

The most striking illustration of the effect of hard dull reading I ever met with is given by Macaulay. He mentions the case of an Italian criminal who was permitted to make his choice between reading the works of an Italian historian and going to the galleys as a slave. He decided to read the writings of the historian. He began to read them ; he read on ; but when he got to a part referring to the history of the war of Pisa he gave up the job, dished, dead beaten. Rather than read any more of this history he decided to go and be a slave on one of the galley boats.

I am at the concluding point. I want the ratepayers of this city to go in for a free library, and in time such branches as the circumstances of the community may require. Libraries of this kind excellently sustain and help on the cause of education and virtue. Looked at from the commonest standpoint—viewed in the dollars and cents light—I maintain that free libraries are profitable investments for ratepaying bodies. They develop a taste for reading ; they keep people out of bad company ; they direct the rising generation into paths of study ; they divert working-men from the street corner and the low, corrupting dram-shop ; they secure for the people an acquaintance with the productions of the best and greatest minds ; they tend to promote public virtue ; their influence is on the side of order, self-respect, intelligence, and general enlightenment ; and by developing these virtues amongst the multitude, they must necessarily diminish the ranks of those two great armies which are constantly marching to gaols and penitentiaries, and in the same ratio they must decrease the sums of money which ratepayers have to provide for the maintenance of those places. And even if these libraries effected no saving of money, nay, even involved an ultimate increase in public expenditure (which they will not), then, I say, it would be still wise to have them ; for I contend that it is infinitely preferable to pay for intelligence than to tolerate ignorance. I want Toronto to pay for intelligence—for popular education in the free library sense. If she does so fairly and fully, her bill for poverty and depravity will be materi-

ally diminished, and with such diminution we shall all be benefited and blessed. I know of nothing more useful, nothing more genuinely ornamental or creditable to a community, than the possession of a good free library, by means of which may be enjoyed the productions of the finest minds—

“Brilliant wits and musing sages,  
Lights who beamed through many ages.”

A cheap supply of good books, a free supply of them by means of a library, I advocate; for, with Thomas Carlyle, I believe that “in books lies the *soul* of the whole past time—the articulate, audible voice of the past, when the body and material substance of it has altogether vanished like a dream. Mighty fleets and armies, harbors and arsenals, vast cities, high-domed, many-engined—they are precious, great; but what do they become? Agamemnon, the many Agamemnons; Pericles and their Greece—all are gone now to some ruined fragments, dumb, mournful wrecks and blocks. But the books of Greece! There Greece to every thinker still literally lives—can be called up again to life. No magic rune is stranger than a book. All that mankind has done, thought, gained or been—it is lying, as in magic preservation, in the pages of books. They are the chosen possessions of men.” I want this city of ours to be rich in this enduring and splendid possession.

## APPENDIX.

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### RULES FOR THE SELECTION OF A FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY.

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1. That the library should, as far as possible, represent every phase of human thought and every variety of opinion.

2. That books of permanent value and standard interest should form the principal portion of the library, and that modern books of value and importance should be added from time to time as they are published.

3. That the library should contain those rare and costly works which are generally out of the reach of individual students and collectors, and which are not usually found in provincial or private libraries.

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### RULES AND REGULATIONS SUITABLE FOR FREE LIBRARIES,

*Used by the Birmingham Free Library.*

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#### FREE LENDING LIBRARIES.

##### RULES AND REGULATIONS:

1. The chief librarian shall have the general charge of the libraries, and shall be responsible for the safe keeping of the books, and of all other property belonging thereto.

2. The newsroom shall be open to the public, every day (Sundays, Christmas Day, and Good Friday excepted), from nine o'clock a.m. to ten o'clock p.m., and the library from ten o'clock a.m. to nine o'clock p.m.



10. Borrowers, when they change their residence, are required to hand in their tickets with their present address to the librarian, otherwise they will lose their right of borrowing books.

11. Borrowers are cautioned against losing their tickets, as they will be held responsible for any book or books that may be taken out of the library in their names.

12. No borrower will be allowed to have more than one work at the same time.

13. No book can be renewed more than once, if required by any other borrower.

14. No borrower will be allowed to make use of more than one of the lending libraries at the same time.

15. The librarian shall have the power to refuse books to any borrower who shall neglect to comply with the rules and regulations of the library, but any person so refused shall be at liberty to appeal to the Library Committee.

16. That the Free Libraries Committee shall not make any dividend, gift, division or bonus in money unto or between any of its members.

By order,

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*Librarian.*

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#### RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

No person will be allowed to obtain any book without signing a "Reader's Ticket," and such signature shall be taken and considered to be an assent to the rules and regulations of the library.

Readers giving a false name and address will be held responsible for the consequences.

Readers cannot obtain more than one work on the same ticket.

It is expressly forbidden to take out of the reading room any book, map, manuscript, or other article belonging to the library, or to write or make any marks upon the same.

Readers desirous of proposing books for addition to the library, or of making any suggestions as to its management, may do so by writing the same in a suggestion book, which is regularly submitted to the committee for consideration.

No person will be admitted to the library who is intoxicated, or in a dirty condition ; nor will any conversation be permitted in the room.



No person is allowed to pass within the enclosure, except by special permission of the librarian.

Persons under fourteen years of age are not admitted to the reference library, except for special purposes to be determined by the librarian.

The costly illustrated works are issued only on written application to the committee.

Newspapers having been cut, and illustrated works disfigured, are in future to be used on the large round tables near the desk. Copying is permitted, but not tracing, as this has resulted in damage to the illustrations. Readers are particularly requested not to soil or injure the illustrations by fingering or laying their hands on them.

The use of ink for copying extracts, etc., is not permitted, as serious injury to plates and books has resulted therefrom.

MAY 30/24-

